



Saddle Up... Tonight We Ride

It's 0600 hours, dark, early, and the commander is tired and groggy — Stand To. A crying child approaches, fever raging. The commander, the spouse of a deployed tanker or cavalryman, initiates an all-too-familiar battle drill — the emergency room. Moving quickly she wakes, dresses herself and four children, preps a snow and ice-laden vehicle, and crosses the LD. As she nears the objective, one child sprays windshield de-icer into the eyes of his brother. Calmly she instructs the spraying victim to, "Hang tight, we are almost at the hospital." While comforting the child with the fever, driving the car, and applying her makeup, she settles another border dispute between siblings before sliding into the hospital's icy parking lot. Her actions at the objective are a marvel of efficiency: she conducts an informal triage with the emergency room staff, settles kids into activities, and begins planning for Class I. And you thought qualifying a tank or conducting a zone recon was tough.

Not long ago I glanced down at my calendar to discover that May 12 was not only a Friday but also Military Spouse's Day. Not sure where I got the information or what inspired me to annotate it, I announced the day's significance to the magazine's staff and drew little response. What actions are required on Military Spouse's Day — a gift, flowers, or is there some sort of ritual or festival involved? Ignorance is not always bliss.

It's getting difficult to track the plethora of recognition days and months. Honestly, how many of you knew 12 May was Military Spouse's Day, and for those of you who did (both of you), what did you do to honor your spouse? My course of action was simple: do nothing and hope (normally not a method). Declaring a day "Military Spouse's Day" as a means to check the block and recognize this outstanding group is a gross injustice — they have earned and deserve much more.

The wives of mounted soldiers have a history as long and storied as their husbands. Over a hundred years ago, wives waved goodbye to cavalymen on western frontiers, and today they do the same, bidding farewell to tankers and cavalymen off to Kosovo, Bosnia, SW Asia, and Korea. We slink out the door for TDYs and deployments confident that our spouses will keep the home fires burning, visiting emergency rooms, battling TRI-CARE, fixing the car, taking care of the lawn while raising our children.

We ask a great deal of our wives; we ask them to leave family and friends to follow us; we ask them to relocate every two or three years, and endure the destruction of their treasured belongings by movers contracted at the lowest bid; and we require them to run our home during long work hours and frequent separations. These are special women indeed, so *ARMOR* will take a moment to both salute and thank the wives of the men of the mounted force — thanks very much, ladies. I for one will do better next year.

We think you'll find an eclectic collection of articles in this issue of *ARMOR*. In an interesting bit of timing that coincides with recent events in the Middle East, we chose CPT James Leaf's article on the Israel approach to MOUT in the 1982 Lebanon campaign for our cover. This is the season for Annual Training and we feature two pieces on the National Guard and Reserve which attempt to answer the questions: "What to Make of National Guard Tankers?" and "Can the One Team Concept Mean One Equal Team?". Also, a defining moment approaches for the Interim Brigade, as the Platform Selection Process will soon designate a vehicle for the mobile gun system, and CPT Francis Park makes a case for a second look at the Armored Gun System.

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